

had good debates, and soon we'll have a nominee who will carry a conservative banner into this election and beyond. Listen, the stakes in November are high. This is an important election. Prosperity and peace are in the balance. So with confidence in our vision and faith in our values, let us go forward, fight for victory, and keep the White House in 2008.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:21 a.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to David A. Keene, chairman, American Conservative Union Foundation and Conservative Political Action Conference; and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan. He also referred to H.R. 5140; and Executive Order 13457, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Regional Tornado Damage in Lafayette, Tennessee *February 8, 2008*

Listen, I want to thank you for the briefing. People have got to understand here in the region that a lot of folks around America care for them now. And I'm here to listen, to determine, to make sure that the Federal response is compassionate and effective. I don't want people to think something is going to happen that's not going to happen. And therefore, when we say something is going to happen to help them get their feet back on the ground, it will happen.

Secondly, I am here to thank the people that will provide the compassion for people who hurt. I notice we've got the Red Cross sitting over there. They're good responders. They respond to help people in need.

Thirdly, I will make it clear to people here that I have no doubt in my mind this community will come back better than before. Macon County people are down-to-earth, hard-working, God-fearing people, who, if just given a little help, will come back stronger.

And that's what—and so I want to thank you all for the briefing. Governor, again, thank you for being here. Appreciate the Senators and Congressmen joining us too.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 a.m. at the Lafayette Fire Department's Atwell & Scruggs Fire Station. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Philip N. Bredesen, Jr., of Tennessee.

Remarks Following a Tour of Tornado Damage in Lafayette *February 8, 2008*

The President. Phil and June Spears have just—I looked in their eyes and saw incredible sadness and worry.

Phil Spears. It's true.

The President. And I know the Governor joins me in sharing our concerns with you. But I hope a couple of things become evi-

dent to you. One, there's a lot of people who care about you, total strangers showing up here in this community to help you get back on your feet.

And the Government has got a role to play. And I want to thank the Senators and Congressmen for being here, because

they know that there is programs available for you. And one of the things the people have got to do is call a phone number. If your life has been turned upside down here, if you've been affected, you ought to call 1-800-621-3362, 1-800-621-3362. And that's where you can find out the help that is available.

What happened is, is that the Governor and his team quickly moved as this storm moved through this—moved through the State of Tennessee, and he made an assessment, and he sent the paperwork up to me. And because he moved quickly, I was able to sign a disaster declaration that then frees help. And so we want the folks to know that there is help from the Federal Government, and he can get the number I just outlined. But there's also going to be a lot of help from loving neighbors.

And we're sorry you're going through what you're going through. You know, life sometimes is unfair, and you don't get to play the hand that you wanted to play.

Mr. Spears. That's true.

The President. But the question is, when you get dealt the hand, how do you play it? And I've come away with this impression of the folks in Macon County: One, they're down-to-earth, good, hard-working people. They have a respect for the Al-

mighty. And this community is going to be as strong as ever. That's what I think.

Mr. Spears. Yes, sir.

The President. I bet you feel the same way.

Mr. Spears. Yes, sir. If it wasn't for my friends, I don't know what I'd do.

The President. And you're going to find you got some new friends showing up too—

Mr. Spears. Appreciate it.

The President. —people you've never heard of, they don't know who you are, total strangers. But when they know there's a neighbor in need, they'll come and help you.

And I appreciate you giving me a chance to come by, and I know the folks traveling with me appreciate. We're so sorry you're going through what you're going through, but there's help, and that's what you've got to know.

Anyway, God bless. Thank you.

June Spears. Thank you.

Mr. Spears. Appreciate it.

The President. Yes. Hang in there, brother.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:43 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Philip N. Bredesen, Jr., of Tennessee.

The President's Radio Address *February 9, 2008*

Good morning. One of the most important jobs of any President is to find good men and women to lead Government agencies, preside over our courts, and provide vital services to the American people. So I have nominated talented individuals for these positions. Unfortunately, the Senate is not meeting its responsibility to consider these nominees in a timely manner. More than 180 of my nominees are waiting for confirmation. Some have been waiting for

more than a year. As a result, careers have been put on hold, families have been placed in limbo, and our Government has been deprived of the service of these fine nominees.

On Thursday, I stood with many of these nominees at the White House. They are decent and talented people. The Senate needs to confirm them to address important issues, from the economy to public safety to national security.